The five people you meet in heaven

The five people you meet in heaven is a story in which Mitch Albom portrays through a postmortem window, all the clues that will help the protagonist to find peace in heaven. It is seen in the pages how Eddie, the main character, learns five lessons that give him the answers to the random collisions of his existence. These lessons are presented by five dead people, each of them stand for a turning point in Eddie’s lifetime. It is the intention of this work to explain each character’s purpose within the story, and how this mutually impacting meetings change Eddie’s life.

The first person that Eddie meets in heaven is The Blue Man.  He was a sideshow worker at Ruby Pier when Eddie was a child. The Blue Man is Joseph Corvelzshick, the “nervous” son of a tailor. As a result of his nerves, Joseph starts taking silver nitrate, a poison that turns his skin an ashy blue and soon, The Blue Man started to work with the circus. Eddie did not know The Blue Man, but his actions were responsible for the Blue Man’s death.  The Blue Man teaches Eddie his first lesson, which is that there are no random acts in life, and that all incidents are intertwined in some way.

The second dead person in heaven is his old Captain from the war. Captain helps Eddie come to terms with the fact that he is really dead. Captain tells Eddie that he is actually the one who shot Eddies leg during the war, in order to save his life. Although Eddie becomes furious and attacks Captain, he accepts Eddie’s anger. Eddie later finds out through the Captain that the Captain had died in a bombing that saved the lives of Eddie and his fellow soldiers. The Captain teaches him that he sacrificed his life in order to keep his promise with his men and that all sacrifices are made for a reason, and when a person loses something, it often gains something else. He learns also of the equal or greater opportunity that results from adversity.

When Eddie meets Ruby in heaven, she is elderly; however when Ruby was younger, she worked as a waitress at a diner in Eddie’s town. Ruby was a poor working girl until she met Emile, a sophisticated, self-earned, rich man. Emile builds Ruby a beautiful, red and crème amusement park and names it Ruby Pier. She is able to show his father’s life through her eyes and teaches Eddie to let go of his anger and to forgive his father for the damage he caused in his life.

Eddie’s wife, Marguerite, is introduced in the very beginning as a “wound beneath an old bandage… a bandage he had become accustomed to.” She is the love of Eddie’s life, but dies at the young age of 47. Although both Eddie and Marguerite love children, Marguerite is not able to conceive and they try to adopt. Marguerite, after a car accident is hospitalized and due to the months spent in recovery they are never able to adopt a child. Although this tests their marriage, they overcome even this and slowly start to be happier. That is until Marguerite is suddenly diagnosed with a brain tumor and leaves Eddie. Eddie meets Marguerite in heaven and learns that she did not just leave Eddie and that Eddie’s love for her was never weakened due to her death.

The last person that Eddie meets in heaven is the young Asian girl named Tala. When Eddie set the prisoner of war camp on fire, during the war, he was sure he saw an innocent child crawling around in the fire. For the rest of his life he had nightmares and that thought haunted him. It seemed as though he knew, in his heart, that he had killed a child. Eddie is horrified when hears from Tala’s lips that he killed her and he begs for forgiveness, at the same time he learns repentance. But Tala tells him that his aim in life was to remain alive to protect all the children who play at the Ruby Pier. Eddie understands that all of us have an assignment on earth.

To conclude, this story depicts how five people in heaven illuminate the unseen connections of Eddie’s earthly life in order to allow him to reach peace. It gives a hoping message to understand and accept why we are here, and why things happen.